

Hawthorne. (J.)

a peaceful pipe.







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## A PEACEFUL PIPE.

MUCH thought, supplemented by no little experience, has led me to prefer the pipe before all other methods of tobacco using. There exist objections—but neither are Saint Peter's dome and the Medicean Venus wholly satisfactory, though on the whole the best of the kind. There are times and places tolerant only of the cigarette, tenderly white and sweetly fragrant; a grimy pipe is no fit sight for the dark-eyed daughters of warm Castile. And have we dined with delicate sumptuousness; has each successive viand, from pearly oyster to perfumed Stilton, at once cunningly relieved the palate from what went before, and subtly stimulated it for what was to come; in short, has the repast been an epicurean song of finest harmony—hardly may we play the epilogue upon a pipe. More fitting there will be the refined Habana, dark and tapering, yielding a firm white column of moulded ash, which may be broken from its fiery base, but crumbles not. Let the elderly dowager, with high-arched nose, and the silk-stockinged Frenchman of the old régime, enshrine themselves in their gold snuff-boxes. And be not even that other preparation of the weed too much condemned. A horseman once, on a twenty-four-hour gallop, condensed all nourishment into a mouthful or two of "chewing tobacco," and it brought him successfully through.

But, after all is said, we turn to the pipe once more. It is better than chewing and snuffing, because we taste the fire-emancipated soul instead of the unrefined material part; better than the cigar, because the cigar is a mere stranger—a passing acquaintance; though much of the fine gentleman be in him, he is dry and formal. Beginning the conversation with airy words of captivating savor, his language gradually grows stronger, till at

the end he sinks into rank and bitter repinings; now is he gone forever and forgotten. No romantic associations can cling to him; his history is comprised in a single event. Picturesque he is not; an attaché of the fashionable world, it is beneath his dignity to consort with such people as Teniers drew; nor will he enroll himself among the familiar spirits of poets and philosophers. Shakespeare with a Partaga between his teeth! Milton wrestling with an Intimidad! Dante puffing a cheroot! We cannot entertain such images. But a quaintly carved pipe-bowl, embrowned and lustrous—would it not add to the grave dignity of each one of them?

Better again is the pipe than the cigarette—the female cigar. The very qualities in which consists her charm argue against placing exclusive dependence on her. She is the beguilement of an indolent moment, the diversion of a mind unoccupied—not a trusty friend in weariness and trouble, a solid resource in winter and rough weather. She is even more fleeting and inconstant than the cigar; we rather breathe a cigarette than smoke it; take it as an interlude to the serious habit—a graceful make-believe for spare hours. Leave cigarettes to ladies and Frenchmen, only using them yourself when in a ladylike or Frenchy humor. They are unworthy the strength and understanding of a developed man; and like a book of jests, should only be taken up occasionally. I am tempted, in justification of having dubbed them "female cigars," to mention a confirmative characteristic: though so little of the real substance of tobacco is to be got from them, they produce more smoke than pipe and cigar together.

But the pipe, if brought to trial, can find a sounder plea than mere disparagement of rivals. He takes his stand upon his intrinsic virtues—they are un-



deniable and not few. To begin, he has permanent existence; again and again does he serve your turn, and still is ready for a fresh bout; nay, he gains in mellowness and beauty with each successive charge. Clear but his throat occasionally—anon stuff that ever-open mouth with a pinch of fresh hay, and he will commune sweetly with you all day long. The weeks pass by, and now his warm cheeks have grown familiar to your hand, his curved mouth-piece to your lips, his form and proportions to your eye. Weeks grow to months, and months bring forth the years; you scarcely realize how intimate have become your relations with your swarthy friend; how well you know him; how much you like him; how his loss would leave an important void in your life and heart. Bethink yourself how many gentle associations tinge him with colors bright and sombre, visible to your mind, as the nicotian stain to your eyes. Your companion by night and by day, in merriment and in distress, he has watched your growth, seen your opinions change, glowed with your hopes, burned incense for your success, mourned in ashes for your disappointment. What other friend has been so finely sympathetic, so unobtrusively consoling, so seldom unwelcome? To whom else dare you whisper the secrets freely confided to him? Where in all the world shall you find one so receptive, yet so discreet; at once so suggestive and so silent? To part from him is to throw away the essence of your life, your experience, your wisdom; he is the burial urn of your past, and therefore the lottery urn of your future; and carved and chased with the strange forms and patterns born of fantasy.

But there are pipes and pipes; from the Irishman's black cutty to the jewelled hookah of Turkey's Sultan. One's choice must be determined by taste and temperament; you may often study a man through his pipes and the tobacco he puts in them; the nature ever shapes the equipment. Be it observed, however, that the same man

smokes not always the same pipe; if the Irishman becomes Governor of New York perhaps he will set up a meerschaum; the Sultan, deposed and driven into exile, may content himself with a brier-wood. As to tobacco, it varies in strength as the head and stomach, and also as the years. In college we used to smoke Cavendish and perique in gambier clays, which speedily grew jet black in the face, and even broke into a sable sweat when hard run. This may do for lusty youths of twenty, who have a foundation of ballground and river to fall back upon; but years brought discretion along with inactivity, and our inordinate Cavendish became largely tempered with Lone Jack and Virginia, and by and by these assumed undivided sway. Once we made a determined attack upon Turkish tobacco, at four dollars a pound, but were speedily repulsed at all points; it was too hot and too intense a fire. At last, however, we made up the residue of our purchase into cigarettes, and by this flank movement decimated the enemy with ease. Since then we have remained constant to our light Virginia troops, and have no reason to be dissatisfied with them.

In styles of pipe I have experimented largely; have sounded the gamut of plain clay, gambier, meerschaum (and chip), charcoal, porcelain, and brier. The plain clay—the cutty—is workmanlike and democratic; I think I should adopt it if I were running for high office. Gambier is rather fantastic, but colors as easily as sweet sixteen; to me it is an objection that, being made in moulds, I know not how many thousand people may be puffing at the twin brother or sister of that between my fingers. As for the charcoals, they promised well, and were not without their season of popularity; there was something of classic elegance and simplicity in their smooth black dress and silver trimming. But they didn't wear well, somehow; they broke, and got incurable croup, and of course never altered their color for



better or worse. And the porcelain was hard and harsh, heating and unabsorbent; so the question finally lay between meerschaum and brier.

Now, than a fine piece of true meerschaum nothing is more fascinating, sweeter, handsomer. Mark its tender, creamy tint, its soft, fine lustre, its smooth texture. Lift it—it is light as a sponge; and you can almost indent it by the pressure of your fingers. You fill it (rather, if you are wise, you fill a false bowl set on to it), and as you draw in the smoke you can almost see the delicate brown flushing deeper and deeper through the white. By slow degrees, lest you overheat it, with most jealous care, lest you chip or scratch it, do you prosecute the experiment, until, after some weeks or months, the point of perfection is attained. There is nothing comparable to the warm, intense brown, mottled and shaded, rich and polished, which is now diffused around the bowl. It is not like moss agates, nor oriental marbles, nor precious woods, yet it brings all these delicately to mind. The color lies in clusters, as it were, yet shades off uniformly toward the lip, which is burned white. Around the neck it is deepest and thickest, and just here you can hardly call it less than black. There is a similar difference between the pipe now and in its primitive purity, to that between a sunlit cloud at midday and the same gilded and empurpled by the splendor of sunset.

Not always, however, nor indeed often, is such success in meerschaum-coloring met with. In the first place, instead of meerschaum, it turns out to be "chip," which is shavings of meerschaum welded together, and so recut; the pipes look well enough in the shop, but all the sponginess and delicacy is lost; the oil cannot penetrate, or comes out in blotches here and there; the bowl becomes rusty and dirty, all the perique in the world can produce nothing better on it than a dirty yellow tint, irregularly distributed, and the draft gets easily clogged. Similar is

the result should the pipe prove—meerschaum indeed, but—of a hard, impenetrable variety. Nothing can be done; you may boil it and burn it, and make it all sorts of colors, but you can deceive neither yourself nor any one else into thinking it comparable to the genuine, inimitable "sea-foam."

This is not the only trouble about meerschaum. Supposing you to have secured a fine piece—the best piece in the universe, say—you would not be more happy than miserable. The whole universe seems leagued to destroy it. You fear to put it away, lest harm should come to it in your absence; equally do you dread taking it up, for there is the risk of dropping, scratching, breaking. While smoking it you cautiously keep on the morocco case; handling would soil the bowl, and you have heard that the coloring oil evaporates if the pipe be exposed to the air. The longer and more completely your precautions are successful, the greater your anxiety and nervous apprehension; and if, after all (it generally ends so), the cherished, the inimitable, the invaluable meerschaum is broken all to pieces, your agonizing sense of loss pays dear for your season of uneasy ecstasy.

This ever-present excitement and unrest is destructive to the peace and comfort which should attend thoughts of pipe-smoking. Our pipe should be our refuge and solace rather than our care and torment. You will seldom find a smoker of age and experience indulging his habit through a costly and fragile medium; possibly, if he be rich, he will have you to his cabinet and parade before you a choice specimen of "real Vienna," but you will notice that the clay is still virgin, and having carefully locked it back in the cabinet, your experienced friend picks up some battered, disreputable looking old corn-cob or other, which he loads and fires with a sigh of relief and satisfaction, and when he is through smoking he throws the corn-cob carelessly on the table, nor careth

he should it fall thence to the floor; bless you! the corn-cob can stand it. Be not deceived by this seeming neglect, however; trust me, your wise friend loves corn-cob from his heart, and would feel its loss there, while the "choice Vienna's" evanishment would chiefly harrow his—pocket.

We vote for brier-wood, then? Well, at any rate, it behooves us in this place to speak of it. There is a charm about a fine brier, as regards tint, texture, and gloss, not so captivating as meerschaum, of course, but a very substantial, legitimate charm nevertheless. It is a genuine, natural product; nothing about it is artificial except the shaping; it has been neither baked, moulded, nor painted. A new brier has a very clean and wholesome look, connecting itself in the mind with a sense of strength and durability. The pale salmon color of the wood is curiously mottled and streaked, giving the pipe a piquant interest such as no plain, unvariegated wood, whatever its tint, could possess. You are conscious of a feeling of good humor and easy familiarity toward the thing; a sentiment that may easily ripen into warm regard or love, very different from the awful reverence and fearful affection inspired by the immaculate meerschaum. Here is a pipe, handsome, sincere, and practical; usable in rain or shine, superior to morocco cases, indifferent to knocks and scratches; a pipe innocent of false bowls and buttons; withal a pipe which will last your lifetime, and mellow in taste and appearance year by year. An inexpensive pipe, lastly, and one where expense will be no risk. These considerations, supplemented by the accident of coming across a remarkably fine specimen, were potent enough some ten years ago to influence me. I bought a brier-wood with all the fervor of youthful enthusiasm, nor has the cooling of a decade of winters moved me to regret the deed.

Reader, I were unmannerly to talk thee down, and not to offer thee a smoke for recompense. There lies my

pipe on the little stand between the windows. The Japanese tobacco-box, carved in cunning figures from a section of giant bamboo, stands guard behind it. One flank is defended by an oddly-designed ash-receiver; an ass's head full of matches protects the other. Over all is shed a genial glow from the crimson cloth, gold-edged, which drapes the stand, and fraternizes jovially with the afternoon sunshine.

The pipe itself is of unusual size, carved into the likeness of a human face; a very peculiar face, which provokes at once a smile and a sigh; in all these years I have not wearied of it, for it is full of ever-fresh interest and suggestion. The features are shaped by a bold hand, but guided with masterly skill, as well as profound knowledge and feeling. Uglier the face could not well be, but with an ugliness thoroughly human. A brow low and projecting, the foundation of a pair of curling ram's horns, eyes large, deep-set, expressive of pathetic weakness, nose aquiline, albeit broad and flattened, a thick, projecting upper lip, and timorous, retreating chin. A weak smile glimmers over the features, not broad, hardly mirthful; rather as if striving to reflect the merriment which their ungainliness might excite. Whoever designed this pipe was an artist, and one who had looked into the human heart.

Well, pick him up and fill his empty head with brains from the tobacco-box. Tobacco is all his intellect, and smoke the sole manifestation of the enkindlement thereof; yet how many orators, think you, or authors, or pulpit ministers even, have the art or power to soothe, beguile, inspire, that this undemonstrative but subtly potent enchanter possesses? He never speaks; the greater part of his life he lies cold and dead upon the table; but the brief hours of his life are full of fervent fire. The oftener we are under the spell of his voiceless eloquence, the oftener arises the longing to yield to it again; his monotony never bores us, because the very breath of his life



comes and goes absolutely at our own command.

Fill full, and press down hard; there must be no empty chambers in this occiput. Now a match from the ass's head, which we will scratch upon the under side of the mantelpiece yonder; so to do is one of the universal instincts of man's nature, and were mantelpieces polished underneath, it would be a general calamity. Blue burns the match, then yellow; we draw the flame downward through the pipe-bowl, and straightway up rises the brown tobacco into a glowing mound. In the same moment the first smoke-cloud issues from our lips, and the pipe is lit.

We seek the easy-chair, and gently yield ourself to its embrace. No reading—no writing; the true smoker will not so profane his enjoyment. Smoking is an elevated mental and psychological pleasure; he who finds in it merely an assistance to digestion, or the gratification of a morbid craving, is unworthy the brotherhood. It calms the brain, caresses the nerves, and as a semi-conscious act, furnishes just sufficient nucleus for floating thoughts and fancies to crystallize about. Charming playfellows are these impalpable rifts of delicate blue smoke that rest, and sway, and curve, and vanish upon the still air of the room. They are a page upon which the waywardest dreamer may pen his most fantastic notions; and here we write fearlessly the cherished secrets of our heart of hearts; for behold, a breath, a motion, and tablet and record are no more. But breathe forth another to replace it; see it stream and undulate along its graceful course! Now it crosses a breath of sunshine, which seems to clothe it with sudden color and solidity. By that path of light it clammers lazily upward, and is lost again in the shadows of the ceiling.

Or let us try our luck at making rings. It is a matter of inspiration; can neither be taught nor learned. After much envious admiration of oth-

ers' proficiency, after numberless vain contortions of lips and tongue on our own part—at last some happy accident sends out the smoke wreathed into something like the long-desired form. Thereafter, incessant practice, until the very palate aches again. At length, complete mastership. Rings of all sizes, in any quantity, revolving either right or left, sailing or stationary; even the champion feat of sending one through another is successfully executed. Here is one shall hang itself upon yonder projecting antler, and this shall break its soft circle around the dear pictured face which smiles upon us from the wall. It lingers there lovingly a moment, then dies regretfully away. But methinks a purer halo than aught of our creation brightens above that head, and will brighten forever, though we see it not.

But we must use our tobacco-stopper! The heated embers have started up so high as to be insecure, and require repression. And what shall our tobacco-stopper be? I believe such things are made of malice prepense, for the especial purpose; but I fancy only fine-weather smokers own them—dilettanti, who would not scruple to puncture the end of their cigar with a pin, instead of biting it off in an honest and manly way. The name of our tobacco-stopper is legion; a pencil, a knife-handle, a twist of paper, the ferule of a cane, the cork out of the ink-bottle, and, most favorite of all, an old silver seal set on a cornelian shaft. Of all, however, not one happens to be within reach; we will not wrong ourself by getting up from our chair to search, but will e'en use the top of our middle finger, which, to tell truth, has done the business innumerable times before, and will most likely be the chief operator in the future. We feel the fine prick of the heat as we stamp down the ashes, and our fingertip is ash-coated when we withdraw it. But we are not disturbed; the smoker is by nature a philosopher, and will not much repine even should he find a little brown-edged hole or two on the

knee of his broadcloth pantaloons—traces of the burning tears of affection which pipes occasionally shed.

Thus do we peacefully sit, while the air grows hazy around us, and the material world retires and fades. Hotter and hotter against our hand press the brown cheeks of our mahogany-colored friend. Listen to the drowsy babble of the nicotine in his throat ! Closing our eyes the pipe becomes a part of us; the pulse of our lives beats in unison; with a common impulse do we perform our smoky respiration. Man-pipe or pipe-man—which are we ?

Asleep ! no; only very composed and quiet. When the mind steps aside, as it were, to watch its own

gambols, the body is apt to fall into a sort of trance. But how is this ? The dual life has ceased ! One member, during our momentary inattention, has sunk into cold ashes and will not revive for all our efforts. True, we may pick out the dead embers, and fill up afresh; we can instill new life, but the old is gone forever. And we are older now; the sun has sunk behind the roof of yonder church; the whole great universe has swept an hour nearer to its mysterious goal. Those few idle minutes—they lie far behind us in the vast of space and time. Did we value them enough while they were here ? Our pipe is out. Where and when shall we smoke another ?

JULIAN HAWTHORNE.

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## THE ONE ROSE.

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NO buds of spring had decked as yet  
That garden's blest retreat;  
But thou wert there, my rose of love,  
And all the air was sweet !  
Above the bare brown trees the sky  
Was gray with wings of storm;  
But once thy breath was on my cheek,  
And all the world was warm !

O life ! O love ! O time that seemed  
A pulse's doubling beat !  
O clouds !—a shadowing flight of doves,  
So softly gray and fleet !  
Ah me ! no days of June shall bring,  
For all their deepening skies.  
One half the summer that outshone  
From depths of sea-dark eyes !

Some words whose meaning gracious sweet  
Their music did confuse—  
Like stained oriel's lines half lost  
Within its gorgeous hues.  
Most generous grace ! most royal rose  
That oped that wintry hour,  
Not all the summers of the world  
Can mould one more such flower !

Oh ! my enchanted isle, more dear  
Than Eden's blessed plains !  
The wild seas swept across the spot—  
For bower nor bloom remains !  
Yet hold thy treasure, heart of mine,  
For while these pulses beat  
The memory of that rose shall make  
All my soul's desert sweet !

KATE CARLISLE.





